

WATCHFUL EYES ON INDIANA AND OHIO ELECTIONS

Rough Rectangle of Sister States Forms Political Cockpit.

By GEORGE F. HOLMES, International News Service.

"The political cockpit of America" is the way national political leaders of the Capital are sizing up the rough rectangle formed by the sister States of Ohio and Indiana. It was so in 1920, they say, and it will be so again in 1922 unless all signs fail, and all political forecasts are fall down utterly.

Off-year elections, with control of Congress at stake, are still eight months away. Yet in this battle-scarred cockpit the party tocinars are already being steadily beaten to a distance. The way voters, and things are lining up for still another "battle of the century." Scarcely 400 miles in length and 200 miles wide, this irregular square furnishes more political fireworks than any other section of the country three times its size. It is truly the political battleground of the nation.

"As goes Maine so goes the nation" is a political axiom that does not always hold true. Sometimes it fails. But if Indiana and Ohio come out on the same side of the political fence, history proves that the ballot counters might as well throw down their pencils and quit figuring. Occasionally they differ, but not often. Only four times in the history of the United States have Indiana and Ohio split politically, and on these widely separated occasions the differences have been very slight.

Always the campaigns are heated, and usually they are close. The coming election, toward which Congressional lawmakers in Washington already are turning their eyes, promise to be no exception.

Senatorship Fights Hot.

In both States the fight over a single Senatorship promises to eclipse all else and hold the attention of the entire nation. In Ohio the political stakes in the Senatorial race are particularly high. A Presidency and a possible Presidential nomination two years hence are bound up in the Senatorship fight in Ohio next November.

Senator Atlee Pomerene, Democrat, of Canton, is coming for re-election. His Republican opponent has not been selected yet, but whether it be Gov. Harry Davis, Carmi Thompson, Congressman Simon Fess, Congressman Nick Longworth or Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty himself, the fight promises to be spectacular and hot.

The Democrats are convinced that they can carry Ohio with Pomerene. He is popular, he has a good record, and, besides, they are fighting on a lot of discontent with Republican policies to manifest itself in the form of Pomerene votes.

If Pomerene Wins.

If they are right and if Pomerene can win, then the bald-headed Ohioan will be brought forth in 1924 as the foremost Presidential candidate of the Democracy—the man who defeated the President of the United States in his own home State and led the voters of Ohio to repudiate an Ohio President.

The Republicans hoot these claims. It is impossible, they say, that Ohio will repudiate the Administration of one of her own sons to the extent of sending back a Democratic Senator. Yet privately they admit that the ministerial-looking Cantonian has a big following in Ohio, and the result is going to be close either way.

It is no small task the Democrats have carved out for themselves. The last time Ohio went on record politically it was 400,000 Republican in favor of Warren G. Harding. To overturn a 400,000 majority in the space of two years is no small feat.

Over in Indiana, the battle is complicated by a fight inside the Republican ranks. Former Senator Albert J. Beveridge, who left the Republican party in 1921 to follow the Progressive party, has come out as a candidate for the nomination in opposition to Senator Harry S. New. Seldom has a sitting Senator been opposed for a second term in his own party in Indiana, and the New faction has not taken kindly or in any brotherly spirit, the candidacy of Beveridge. The primary campaign between Beveridge and New will afford the political spectators of the nation a pretty preliminary to the main bout in November.

Harding Backs New.

Senator New has the unequalled endorsement of the White House. Beveridge has a large following, however. Always a popular figure, he lost little of his popularity by his Progressive meandering in 1912, and the returns for that year show, and now he is swaying a political comeback at a time when the rural districts are admittedly hotbeds of discontent over agricultural conditions.

The Democrats of Indiana have not yet picked a Senatorial candidate. It will not be Tom Taggart, however, as he has definitely taken himself out of the race by announcing he is not a candidate. A considerable faction of the Indiana Democracy are hopeful of persuading former Vice President Thomas R. Marshall to get back into the political arena.

Even President Keeps Ear Close to Ground and Has News Clippers Busy.

By WEBSTER K. NOLAN, International News Service.

Public Opinion, that potent force that determines the nation's policy, makes and unmake men and issues, guides to dizzy success and with equal ease reduces national hopes and individual ambitions to shambles, registers with clocklike precision in Washington. Ostensibly devoted to value, it yet is recognized as the most important of Government "departments"—for there is a systematic machine diurnally in operation in Washington which secures and marks and files away every item appearing in American newspapers concerning the Government and Government issues, be it only a squib from the bottom of the last page of a newspaper flourishing in the furthest reaches of the country.

When the Secretary of Commerce intimates to the press men that he expects the nation to be gripped by a gigantic coal strike at a certain date in the future, he jots a note to his Public Opinion staff, and within a week the Secretary has before him a select volume of clippings culled from the editorial pages of journals in all sections of the land and clippings bearing upon the Secretary's statement.

The Secretary wanted to know, for instance, what the editorial of that would be upon his pronouncement. He wished to gauge the reaction of the public opinion, and by the machine-like precision he learns and is guided thereby. He will know whether the people are behind him or against him and, if divided, in what sections the opposition thrives the greatest.

When President Harding is contemplating a move of great importance and he is uncertain of the reception it might receive at the hands of the temperamental public, the Chief Executive solves the problem by calling the newspapermen into conference at the White House and safe in the knowledge that he will not be quoted directly, slips over his idea in indirect fashion, having first precluded his remarks with the indifferent statement that he is about to give "you boys a slant on this thing—nothing definite, however."

The "slant" goes home with hammer-like effect. It is blazoned on the front pages of every afternoon paper in the country within an hour, and the morning papers pick it up. A week later the President calls for public opinion, and he stalks in. Merely he may be, or this time, perhaps, occasionally, enthusiastic. And, accordingly, the President governs his terms.

Every Government department has its staff of newspaper clippers and staff of files. Special file cases hold the editorials, others contain news reports, and still others hold feature stories, syndicated material and cartoons. When the head of such a "bureau" comes upon an article or news item that he knows will interest his chief he puts it in a special basket, and it is carried to the chief.

Though an unseen force, though graced with no official standing, important and hoary, Old Man Public Opinion stalks with a dignity none dare to scorn. They know him here in Washington, and they fear his mandates.

HARDING MAINTAINS CHECK THEN GOES ON VACATION

President Harding's last official act before leaving the White House yesterday for a ten-day vacation sojourn in Florida was to make out his income tax return. The document was then forwarded by mail to Marion, O.

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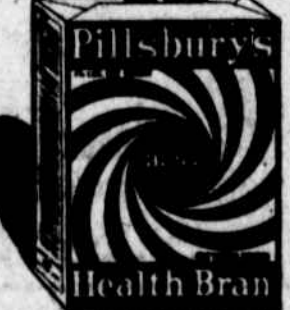
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